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## **Agency Releases Accountability Determinations for Schools**

**MONTPELIER** – The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) released the 2013 school accountability determinations today, showing many schools met the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements for reading. Certain other areas remain a challenge, according to Education Secretary Armando Vilaseca.

“Over half of the schools made AYP this year in reading,” said Secretary Vilaseca. “However we continue to see struggles with math proficiencies and our free and reduced lunch population. We feel it’s important to celebrate the good work that the schools are doing, but also to recognize that we need to figure out how to close these achievement gaps.”

Vermont’s statewide accountability system, designed in part to meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, uses scores from the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) and the Vermont Alternate Assessment Portfolio (VTAAP) to determine if schools are making AYP. The Agency is preparing for the transition from NECAP to the Smarter Balanced Assessment System (in 2015) that is being developed by a consortium of 28 states.

This year, for the first time, the AOE is using test results and other measures of student performance to recognize schools that are making progress and are demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement. By looking deeper into other indicators of successful schools and differentiating the school improvement process, the AOE is able to convey a fuller picture of the challenges that schools face as well as the progress being made. Over 50 schools were honored this year for their commitment to continuous improvement.

“It is clear that many schools are making significant improvement, and just as important are committed to continuing to aim higher,” the Secretary said. “The Smarter Balanced Assessment System (SBAC) uses innovations in assessment technology to provide a better and more robust way to gauge how schools are improving, as well as areas that need more focus.”

This is the eighth year the NECAP has been given in the elementary and middle grades and the sixth time it was given to students in grade 11. The goal is for schools to meet progress targets set by the state as required in NCLB. This year, 81 schools made AYP. 214 schools are identified for school improvement in one or more areas, 21 schools did not make AYP for the first time.

Secretary Vilaseca is available for comment regarding AYP.

The lists of schools which are being recognized are available on the AOE website:

<http://bit.ly/1cFYI3D>. More information on school and district performance can be found here:

<http://bit.ly/S4CSte>. The complete press release packet is available online: <http://bit.ly/19KLQcL>.